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PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 OF OKANOGAN COUNTY

March 30, 2000 APR 5 2000

Federal Caucus Comment Record, c/p BPA-PL
707 W. Main St., Suite 500
Spokane, WA 99201

Dear Federal Caucus:

Okanogan County PUD offers these comments for the record regarding the Federal Caucus' December 1999 "All-H" paper. Its official title is the draft "Conservation of Columbia Basin Fish, Building a Conceptual Recovery Plan".

First, we incorporate by reference those comments sent to you March 16, 2000 by John Saven, Executive Director of the Northwest Irrigating Utilities, Inc. Okanogan PUD is a member of NIU and fully supports the Mr. Saven's comments.

Okanogan PUD wishes to emphasize the "habitat improvement" theme contained in the NIU comments. Assuming that additional "habitat" funding can be obtained as suggested by the NIU, we think the time is ripe for bringing the various watershed interests together. In Okanogan County, we have an example.

1 The Salmon Creek Restoration Project is a positive example of divergent interests working together. Salmon are being re-introduced into a creek that has been dry at its mouth for most of the 20th century because of irrigation diversions. The Okanogan Irrigation District and the Colville Confederated Tribes compromised on a plan to pass salmon on this creek. What made this possible? The project was funded by BPA with the blessing of the NWPPC.

The point is that local economies do not have to be sacrificed for fish to fund what we view as "un-funded mandates" by the federal government. This same positive example can be replicated throughout the Columbia River Basin if only the divergent interests have the courage to compromise.

The Federal Caucus hopefully has the wisdom to reject wishful thinking (such as removing the Snake River Dams) and embrace watershed compromises that work, greased by BPA funding, and at the direction of the NWPPC. That is their job. Why not let them do it?

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the "All-H" paper. We look forward to your final All-H paper sometime in May 2000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harlan Warner".

Harlan Warner
Manager

Cc: Dr. Tom Karier, NWPPC - Spokane
Joe Peon, Colville Confederated Tribes
Byron Louis, Okanogan Nation Alliance
Paul Frasier, Okanogan Irrigation District
John Saven, NIU
Ed Thiele, Okanogan County Commissioner